

There is no greater supporter of President Bush's proposals to reform our immigration laws in this body than I am. I believe that a comprehensive temporary worker plan is the best way to enhance national security at the border. Support for a temporary worker plan is consistent with support for the gentleman from Wisconsin's (Chairman SENSENBRENNER) bill. In fact, I voted against the intelligence reform bill last year precisely because the gentleman from Wisconsin's (Chairman SENSENBRENNER) provisions were not included. Further, the provision on driver's licenses in the Sensenbrenner bill largely mirror provisions that I introduced in a bill in 2002.

Critics of the President's immigration reform bill use words like "unsafe," "insecure," and "dangerous" when talking about a temporary worker plan. But those of us who advocate such a program are no less concerned about national security than our counterparts. In fact, national security is probably the best case that can be made for a meaningful temporary worker program.

Right now we have somewhere between 8 and 15 million illegal immigrants in this country. The vast majority of these people came here simply to work, but we can be sure that a small number are here with more sinister intentions. But given the number of illegal immigrants who are here in the country, trying to find the terrorists, the drug smugglers, the human traffickers amounts to trying to find a needle in a haystack. But if we can offer a framework under which workers can register to legally come to this country and work, we can drastically reduce the size of that haystack and focus our resources on finding the needles.

Some will say that rather than implementing a temporary worker program, we simply need to enforce the laws against illegal immigration that are on the books. That is all well and good, Mr. Speaker, but enforcing the current law would require that we round up everyone who is here illegally and ship them home. Remember, there are as many as 10 million illegal workers here right now. I have not heard one of my colleague seriously recommend that we round all of them up and send them home, yet that is what enforcing the law means.

That said, it seems to me that we have just two choices. We can put in place a temporary worker program and register those who are working here illegally, or we can continue to pretend they do not exist, thus forcing them to work in the shadows, as they have been doing for years now. The latter course is obviously not in the best interest of our Nation's security.

This brings me back to the debate on tomorrow's REAL ID Act. I suspect that in the debate tomorrow on this House floor, there will be talk about how these measures cut down and crack down on illegal immigration. As important as this legislation is, it will

do little to deal with the problem of illegal immigration. These provisions will help red-flag those who are currently in the country illegally, we all remember that many of the hijackers were issued valid driver's licenses that expired long after their visas did, but they will not do much to keep more illegal aliens from coming here and working in the shadows.

There is much more we need to do, Mr. Speaker, and it must start with an honest discussion about how we deal with this country's labor needs as well as our national security needs. I look forward to beginning that discussion as soon as we pass this legislation.

BUDGET PRIORITIES AND MORAL VALUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Bush delivered to this Congress his proposed Federal budget. In the coming months, Democrats and Republicans in Congress will debate budget proposals largely based on divergent cardinal moral values. We will debate budget cuts that represent more than just program additions or scale-backs.

The President's proposed cuts to vital government programs are reflective of differences in moral core philosophies on the role of our government in serving our people. Budgets are moral documents that reveal fundamental priorities of a person, of a household, of a community, of a business, of a government.

There is no better example of where Democratic and Republican values diverge than on Medicaid. The President claims he only wants to cut programs that are either not getting results or that duplicate current efforts or that do not fulfill essential priorities.

As Democrats, we could not agree more on the need for efficient government. That was how we balanced the budget in the 1990s. But which of those three criteria does the President mean when he talks about Medicaid?

There is no question Medicaid gets results. In spite of what my friends on the other side of the aisle like to demagogue, it operates at a lower cost than private health insurance. Private health insurance has in the last few years grown at 12.7 percent; Medicare has grown at 7.1 percent.

Medicaid costs have grown at only 4.5 percent a year. There is no duplication in Medicaid. It is the only program of its kind. It fulfills an essential priority. It is the sole source of nursing home care for 5 million senior citizens in our country who are living in poverty.

The President knows Medicaid is already running on fumes, but he made a choice. He chose to give more tax cuts to the most affluent 1 percent of Americans rather than provide subsistence

care for senior citizens. That is the choice he made, different priorities reflecting a different set of moral values.

Medicaid provides health coverage to 52 million Americans, 1.7 million in my State of Ohio alone. It is the only source of coverage for one out of four Ohio children. It provides 70 percent of nursing home funding in my State of Ohio.

Think about divergent moral values, what we stand for, in our government, in our homes and our families and in our communities. The Bush proposal cuts \$60 billion, billion with a "b", \$60 billion out of Medicaid over the next 10 years. Ask hospitals, ask health care experts, ask senior groups, these cuts will mean kicking seniors out of nursing homes. We have a moral obligation to prevent that from happening.

The President's plan shifts tens of millions of dollars of costs to States, like Ohio, already facing severe financial shortfalls.

The President cannot eliminate basic needs by ignoring them. He cannot eliminate the nursing home care for seniors by ignoring nursing home care or by shifting responsibility to the States which simply cannot afford it. In the short run, his budget cuts will create victims. In the long run, it will force the State to spend more.

And how will that happen? How will the States be able to take care of this? Students will have to pay higher tuition. Homeowners will have to pay higher property tax. Consumers will have to pay higher sales tax. Workers will have to pay higher income tax to make up for the cuts in Medicaid and to make up for the President's huge tax cuts for the wealthiest, most privileged 1 percent.

Medicaid is a partnership between the Federal and State government. Cutting the Federal share hurts our families, hurts our schools, hurts our communities, hurts our States.

We can give up, Mr. Speaker, many things in the name of shared sacrifice, as we should, but common sense should not be one of those things we give up. The President's every-man-for-himself budget neglects our communities and betrays our moral values as a nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.